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NIKOLINA ANGELKOVA
MINISTER OF TOURISM

**GUIDELINES FOR FUNCTIONING OF ACCOMMODATION
ESTABLISHMENTS AND FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT
ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE CONDITIONS OF DANGER OF
COVID-19 INFECTION IN
BULGARIA**

(AGREED WITH THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH)

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INTRODUCTION

The measures proposed in this document have the character of Guidelines for the functioning of accommodation establishments (AE) and the food and entertainment establishments (FEE) adjacent to them or independent, which have open areas (terraces, gardens and other open spaces), in the conditions of COVID-19, in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Given that tourist sites are different in their territorial location, purpose and functions, design, operation and management, adaptations should be made individually, but so as to comply with the Guidelines.

The guidelines may be updated according to the development and spread of COVID-19 in the country.

The guidelines shall be published on the official website of the Ministry of Tourism.

Key objectives of the applied procedures:

1. Increasing the safety and protecting the health of the employees serving the guests of AE and FEE;
2. Minimizing the risk of infecting guests and other outsiders, including suppliers;
3. Limiting the number of contacts on the territory of the tourist sites for a certain period of time, as part of the protection against the risk of infection;
4. Complex and coordinated actions in accordance with the stage of development of the epidemic situation.

The guidelines are in four directions:

1. Ensuring the safety of employees/staff;
2. Ensuring safety and security for the guests at the establishments;
3. Preventive procedures in case of suspected Coronavirus infection by an employee to another employee;
4. Procedures to be followed in case of suspected Coronavirus infection by a guest/guests.

I. GOVERNING/MANAGING TEAM

Before opening of the tourist site and during its operation the following is necessary:

- **Action plan - preparation** of own plan for functioning of the site, in accordance with the recommendations and instructions of the national and regional public health authorities for limiting the coronavirus infection. The plan is subject to **updating** according to the epidemic situation in the country and contains a clear distribution of available human and economic resources in order to prevent and comply with anti-epidemic measures, including a team of staff to respond to crisis situations. The action plan includes specific procedures, in accordance with the current guidelines and the instructions of the Minister of Health and the Director of the Regional Health Inspectorate, for actions and management of cases of infection and their possible contacts.

The implementation of the action plan and the effectiveness of the measures taken must be frequently assessed to verify compliance, identify and correct gaps and adapt the plan to practical experience.

- **Hygiene inspection** - carrying out an initial basic inspection and subsequently conducting a regular audit of hygiene at the establishment in order to establish compliance with the imposed requirements. For this purpose, it is recommended to keep a "Register of hygienic and disinfection activities performed and measures taken and corrective actions", in which information on the conducted activities is recorded in detail (such as date and time, disinfectant used, by whom, where, etc.). The analysis of the information in this register can be used to improve the actions performed.
- **Providing a sufficient amount of face masks** both for the guests and for the employees to be stored at the establishment. The establishment must provide at least 10% more face masks than the maximum capacity of guests and emergency staff.
- Availability of sufficient thermometers for guests, employees and if necessary

- **Communication**
- **Information policy for guests and staff:**
 - ✓ Each of the employees must be aware of their responsibilities according to the establishment operation plan.
 - ✓ Information posters with key messages to guests and staff, brochures and official leaflets on basic hygiene practices and COVID-19 in different languages should be available at the establishment. Instructions must be placed in the sanitary and hygienic areas for proper hand washing, removal and placement of disposable gloves, removal and application of a mask, and for disinfectant dispensers - instructions for proper hand disinfection.
 - ✓ An updated list of staff contacts, important emergency telephone numbers, etc. must be available at the establishment.
 - ✓ The management of the establishment must have carried out initial instruction of the employees on the observance of the sanitary and hygienic measures, as well as to hold regular information meetings about the undertaken main anti-epidemic measures in the country.
 - ✓ A specially trained staff member must be appointed to monitor establishment hygiene and compliance with physical distance rules.

II. ENSURING THE SAFETY OF EMPLOYEES/STAFF

1. Creating working conditions, assuming compliance with the requirement for physical distance between employees and occupational safety in accordance with the applicable law.
2. Reducing the number of employees who use communal areas at the same time, such as a rest room, changing rooms, etc. These rooms should be used on a schedule, with the recommended number of people using them taking into account the possibility of providing a physical distance of at least 1.5 m. The establishment should be equipped with personal protective equipment, including masks or helmets, gloves and hand sanitizers, as well as waterproof long-sleeved aprons for use when needed.
3. Recommendations for employees (according to Appendix № 1).
4. Providing ventilation for the premises, including mechanical general exchange ventilation. The use of air conditioners is not recommended as far as possible, and where their use is unavoidable, regular cleaning and disinfection of the filters shall be carried out. Regular ventilation of rooms with direct access to fresh air should be carried out, and it is recommended to increase the number of air exchanges per hour.
5. Limiting meetings and conferences indoors to the required minimum: meetings should be held in rooms with open windows, maintaining the distance between people

recommended by the health authorities (minimum 1.5 m), it is preferable to communicate by telephone and email or other remote communication channel.

6. Limiting the use of communal areas by employees, including:

- introduction of different break hours,
- reducing the number of employees who use communal areas at the same time (for example by allocating meals breaks).

7. Special care for employees from groups exposed to greater risk of an epidemic - if possible, not to engage people over 60 and chronically ill in direct contact with guests.

8. Obligation of the suppliers of AE and FEE to use personal protective equipment in accordance with issued orders and measures, in accordance with the current legislation.

9. Adoption of a procedure to be followed in case of suspicion of an infectious situation and effective instructions to the employees, in accordance with the guidelines and orders of the Ministry of Health and the Regional Health Inspectorate.

III. PROVIDING SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR THE GUESTS AT THE ESTABLISHMENTS

A. RECEPTION AREA AND RECEPTION AT THE ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENT

RECEPTION AREA

- Arrival of guests - regulation and control of the flow of guests at the establishment and compliance with the requirement for physical distance.
- Placing in a visible place in front of the entrance of the establishment and at the reception information about the maximum number of guests who can stay in a given part of the establishment at the same time, as well as to maintain a physical distance of at least 1.5 m between members of different families.
 - * Placing dispensers with liquid hand disinfectants accessible to guests and employees in the premises of the establishment, in particular at the entrances, in the reception area, at the entrance of elevators, at the entrance to the open areas of the food and entertainment establishments and in the lobby to bathrooms, outdoor pool area, etc.

RECEPTION

1. Information and communication

- Receptionists should be sufficiently informed about COVID-19 so that they can perform their duties safely and professionally in order to prevent its possible spread at the establishment.
- Informing all guests and potential customers about the procedures and policies of the site for security and safety, preventive measures applied in connection

with the COVID-19 virus at the given establishment.

- Reception staff must be aware of the occupancy policy of the rooms at the establishment when it comes to accompanying persons in case of suspicion of COVID-19. It is necessary to observe the rules for protection of personal data of guests.
- Preparation and placement in a certain place (easy access) of the necessary telephone numbers of the regional health authorities, the medical institution with which the accommodation establishment has a service contract, emergency centers, pharmacies, etc. The reception must have them at any time.

2. Necessary equipment of the reception with a protection set

2.1. The reception must be equipped with a protection set which should include the following items:

- Disinfectant and/or wipes for cleaning surfaces;
- Hand sanitizer;
- Face masks/eye protection (individually or in combination, fprotective ace helmet, safety glasses). Sufficient additional face masks for the whole establishment (guests and staff).
- Gloves (disposable).
- Protective apron (disposable)
- Protective gown with long sleeves (recommended).
- waste bin with lid.

2.2. In order to protect the employees at the reception, it is recommended the management of the establishment to ensure maximum protection of employees, and in addition to providing personal protective equipment and disinfectants, if possible to provide physical protection of the reception and guest area by placing transparent plastic teller panels , for example, or the like at least 1 m high.

3. Measures for physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene

Although guests are probably familiar with these measures, they need to be reminded with information at the reception in an appropriate way.

- Physical distance - keeping a distance of at least 1.5 m.
- Registration at the reception of more than 2 guests at a time is not allowed, unless they are members of one family. The use of dividers is allowed and useful to control those waiting in the lobby.
- Limiting the stay of the guest at the reception to a minimum.
- Hand hygiene - regular and thorough cleaning of hands by rubbing with hand sanitizer with virus-killing or partial virus-killing action or washing with soap and water. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth before washing. Hand disinfection is also required after

exchanging items (money, personal documents, credit cards) with guests. Observance of respiratory hygiene.

- Encourage the use of an electronic card instead of paying in cash.

B. LOBBY AREA

- Seating area - have separate seating areas outdoors, outside the lobby, which must be at least 1.5 apart. Grouping of guests in the lobby is not allowed.
- Physical distancing - the guest should keep a distance while waiting in line to check-in or check-out.
- Guest elevators - restriction on use to a minimum number of people.
- Regulating the crowding of many people in the lobby, especially during peak hours of arrival and departure of guests, temporary signage and organization of the process to avoid crowding.

C. GUEST ROOMS/ CHAMBERMAID PREMISES / HOUSEHOLD

• Cleaning and disinfection

The application of enhanced and special measures for cleaning and disinfection in the communal areas (toilets, halls, corridors, elevators, etc.) and the provision of appropriate disinfectants (biocides) and detergents as a general preventive measure during the epidemic with COVID -19. Particular attention should be paid to the disinfection of frequently touched contact surfaces - door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, light switches, doorknobs, chairs and armrests and flat surfaces, including counter tops in work rooms and dining rooms etc. Doors and windows, if possible, should be left open longer during the day.

Maintaining the required distance between the staff and the guests (minimum 2 meters).

- Ongoing disinfection, at least once an hour, of shared toilets, elevators, reception (after each guest), door handles, handrails, handknobs, telephones, computer keyboards and other frequently touched surfaces.
- Precise dosing of professional detergents.
- After each guest it is recommended to routinely clean the room and disinfect all contact surfaces (including chair backs), equipment (eg remote controls) and bathroom and thoroughly ventilate the room or after cleaning the room - ozonation/blurring/decontamination with the help of other specialized technologies, such as bactericidal lamps, etc.
- Chambermaids and other cleaning staff must be equipped and use a disposable mask, gloves and, if necessary, a disposable long-sleeved apron.

Bed linen and towels must be washed by specialized persons registered in accordance with

thenational legislation, who must comply with the special additional recommendations for washing at a minimum temperature of 60°C with the addition of detergent and disinfectant.

The collection, temporary storage, transfer of the used bed linen and towels and respectively its receipt and storage of the clean one is carried out in strict compliance with the regulatory requirements and recommendations of the health authorities.

- If possible, systematic ventilation of all rooms at the establishment or ozonation (or decontamination using other available technology, such as bactericidal lamps, etc.) of the communal areas, within certain time intervals.

- It is recommended to provide a personal set of sanitary materials in the rooms /as a compliment for the guests/, including 1 pair of disposable gloves and 1 mask per person.

- **Surveillance for sick guests** - staff should inform the management or reception if likely of persons with acute respiratory illness.
- **Availability of materials and consumables, incl. of personal protective materials** - gloves, disposable masks, if necessary, disposable long-sleeved apron, etc. At anytime.

D. FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS/FOOD AND BEVERAGE AREAS

It is necessary to comply with the Guidelines for Business Operators, prepared by the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and agreed by the Minister of Health, published on their websites:

<https://www.mh.government.bg/rmedia/filer>

<pubHc/2020/05/05/1588669697002documentizi skvaniia km biznes operatorite.pdf>

http://www.babh.government.bg/bg/Page/ukazanie_kym_biznesoperatorite/index/ukazanie_kvm_biznesoperatorite/COVID19%20Указан

1. Information and communication

- The emphasis should be on health protection by providing room service to guests, and in the case of work of the open areas of food establishments - providing contactless technology, adapting to speed up the "without touch" technique, as partial a la carte, pre-order systems, sliding front doors for restaurants and certain automation for the purpose of physical distancing.

- Additional safeguard measures for guests - encouraging hand washing before eating, securing the entrance to the FEE and using disinfectant gels or wipes when entering and leaving the FEE.

- Strict observance of hygiene measures by the staff.
- Change of operation of the food and entertainment establishments.
- The FEE must provide one-way and pedestrian flow with distances of 1.5 to 2 m to facilitate the physical distance.

2. Hygienic conditions and cleanliness

- Improving the hygienic conditions in the FEE and the application of cleaning and disinfection measures in all working areas of the restaurant (buffets; open areas of restaurants; kitchens, etc.) as a general preventive measure during the whole COVID-19 epidemic, especially on the items that are often touched, such as tables, chairs, porcelain, cutlery, spices, etc..

3. Vending machines for drinks

- Machines for coffee, water, beverages, etc., especially parts in contact with the hands of guests, must be disinfected and cleaned after each service.

Options of contactless techniques:

- Switching to a la carte options for food and beverages.
- Buffets, partially converted into an a la carte version of the cooking station on display, Gourmet Plate concept, served on the table.
- One-way movement of guests system.
- Pre-order system for all meal periods.
- Minimizing the use of vending machines for drinks or without self-service.

4. Tables and seats in the FEE, organization of meals

- Meals are provided only in the open areas of the hotel's restaurants or of the food and entertainment establishments.
- Buffet meals are permissible, but only if the food is arranged behind a transparent barrier and its provision is carried out by an employee equipped with a mask and gloves. Self-service and direct contact of the guests with the food is not allowed.
- Adaptation and organization of the space in the open areas of the establishments and the service regime with hours during which it is open in view of the new space requirements, in accordance with the individual layout and capacity of each FEE, according to the rules of WHO and the Minister of Health.
- Placing the tables with outdoor seats in a way that provides a distance of not less than 1.5 m between them and not more than 4 people per table or per family, according to the instructions of the Minister of Health.

E. SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT PROVIDED AT THE ESTABLISHMENT

- Disinfection of on-site equipment made available to guests (e.g. bicycle, etc.) - after each use.
- Due to the threat of the COVID-19 virus, the establishment has the right to suspend or limit services that would increase the risk for guests and staff (e.g. luggage delivery to rooms, etc.).
- It is recommended not to use hair dryers on site.

F. CONFERENCE ROOMS AND EVENTS

It is permissible to hold events only outdoors in compliance with the requirements of physical distance between the participants.

It will be possible to use indoor premises after the order of the Minister of Health is changed in view of the epidemic situation.

G. ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS

AREAS

1. Washing / Disinfection

- The operation and use of swimming pools is allowed.
- The staff servicing the pool shall observe the compliance of safety rules and the physical distance between the visitors.
- Providing a stationary disinfection dispenser in the area around the pool.
- Providing a disinfection dispenser for the entertainment team and guests.
- Each guest should disinfect their hands when joining the activities.

Entertainment activities shall be organized outdoors in compliance with the requirements for physical distance.

- The animation shall be organized only outdoors in compliance with the requirement for physical distance in its implementation.
 - Additional information shall be indicated on the entertainment information board.
 - The use of fitness centers and gyms is allowed, if the establishments are occupied by no more than 10 people for group activities and no more than 1 person per 4 sq.m. area, ensuring physical distance between the persons doing sport.
 - The use of water parks and water attractions is allowed in compliance with the requirement for physical distance in the implementation of their activities and the regulatory requirements for the use and treatment of water in swimming pools according to the order of the Minister of Health.

H. BALNEOLOGICAL/SPA/WELLNESS CENTER

The use of the offered services in balneological (medical SPA), SPA, wellness centers adjacent to the accommodation establishments or independent ones is allowed, in strict compliance with the normative requirements, instructions and recommendations of the Ministry of Health and RHI, incl. and swimming pools, including those with mineral water, again in strict compliance with the regulatory requirements for the use and treatment of water in swimming pools according to the order of the Minister of Health and the Regional Health Inspectorate.

I. ACTIVITIES, RELATED TO TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND SERVICE

- **Equipment and dishwashing facilities**

Ensure proper operation of dishwashing equipment, in particular operating temperatures, as well as the correct dose of detergents and disinfectants according to the manufacturer's instructions.

- **Air-conditioning installation**

The proper functioning of the ventilation equipment and air exchange in the premises should be checked and ensured. At the establishments where the air-conditioning system operates, to ensure its regular prevention, as well as the regular cleaning and disinfection of the filters.

- **Dispensers**

Regular inspections must be carried out to ensure the proper functioning of dispensers for detergents and disinfectants, dispensers for disposable paper towels and other similar devices. Defective devices must be repaired or replaced quickly.

Hand sanitizer dosing devices should be installed in various areas of the hotel, including public toilets used by guests and staff, and other areas (e.g. lounges, restaurants and bars). It is recommended to install contactless dispensers.

- **Cleaning and disinfection** - it is recommended to clean and disinfect all engineering rooms and points of contact of the equipment before returning the building to normal operation.

- **Guest rooms**

If there has been no accommodation in the guest room for 30 days or more, it is necessary to carry out prevention and check for its full use.

J. OTHER AREAS AND PREMISES IN THE ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENT.

- The use of indoor halls for classes is excluded; a place for fun games, children's activities, playrooms, discos and others, which suggest crowding of people, if there is no change in the order of the Minister of Health.

VIII. PREVENTIVE PROCEDURES AT THE ESTABLISHMENT: IN CASE OF SUSPECTED CORONAVIRUS INFECTION OF EMPLOYEES/STAFF

- Obligation to acquaint the establishment staff with regard to the introduced protocol related to COVID-19 (transmission of the most important instructions and obligations in this regard).
- Employees and staff of the establishment should be instructed that in case of symptoms such as fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose, fatigue, muscle aches, etc. they should not come to work, they should stay at home and contact their personal doctor by phone, and in the absence of one to contact the Regional Health Inspectorate and in case of deterioration of their health to call 112 and inform that they may be infected with coronavirus.
- It is recommended to follow the information of the Regional Health Inspectorate and the Minister of Health, available on the official website, as well as the applicable legislation.
- In case of symptoms suggestive of coronavirus infection of an employee who performs his/her duties at work, he/she should be immediately removed from work, isolated and, depending on their condition, sent back home by individual transport or call the Emergency Medical Center team. The employee should wait for the transport in a certain room, where it is possible to temporarily isolate himself/herself from other people.
- It is recommended to determine the area in which the employee has resided and to carry out cleaning and disinfection in it.
- Strictly follow the prescriptions and recommendations of the state health control bodies.

V. PROCEDURES IN CASE OF SUSPECTED CORONAVIRUS INFECTION OF A GUEST AT THE ESTABLISHMENT

- In case of clear signs of illness such as constant cough, discomfort, difficulty breathing, fever, sore throat, runny nose, fatigue, muscle aches, etc. the guest shall be isolated and notified to the management, the doctor at the site or the medical institution with which the site has a service contract, the Regional Health Inspectorate or the Center for emergency medical care.
 - a. Provide the tourist with a mask, separate him from the other tourists and

- provide an opportunity to be examined by a doctor in a pre-designated room;
- b. Appoint one person to take care of the guest who is concerned until the arrival of the health workers, but not different employees.
 - c. Start standard precautions for the designated person, including hand hygiene and the use of personal protective equipment, eye protection, an apron, a protective apron (disposable), or a complete long-sleeved apron (recommended) and gloves;
 - d. Strictly follow the instructions and recommendations of the doctor at the establishment or the health workers of the medical institution with which the establishment has a service contract, the Regional Health Inspectorate or the Emergency Medical Center.
- After isolation/transportation of the guest, cleaning and disinfection shall be performed in the places where he has resided.

Important: In case of suspicion of coronavirus infection of a guest at the establishment, he/she shall be isolated in a pre-prepared room, the establishment shall not be quarantined and the recommendations of the health authorities shall be followed. Upon establishing at the accommodation establishment a tourist with COVID-19, who has mild symptoms, the adopted practice in the countries of the European Union will be used. The guidelines in this part will be updated in stages until the beginning of the active summer season, according to the stages of opening the borders for travel with the respective countries. The specific steps that the hotelier must follow in such a case will be specified on the spot by the medical authorities, according to the individual case.

IV. SUPPLIERS OF GOODS AND SERVICES AT THE ESTABLISHMENT

- Special precautions must be observed during the delivery of goods in the AE/FEE. Drivers transporting and delivering goods and services must wear PPE (mask and gloves) while making the delivery. Before entering a specific area of the establishment, the temperature of the outsiders should be measured.

V. DISINFECTION ACTIVITIES AT TOURIST ESTABLISHMENTS – ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS, FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS AND OTHERS, IN WHICH TOURIST SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE EPIDEMIC SPREAD OF COVID-19

Disinfection measures should be carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the health

authorities, published on the websites of the Ministry of Health and the National Center for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases: https://www.mil.government.bg/ncidi/afi/ler/public/2020/03/25/ncipd_recomm_disinfection_c_ovid19_dobaviane_graidani.pdf
https://www.ncipd.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=Item&id=563:covid-19-desinfection-08032020&lang=bg
https://www.mh.government.bg/media/filer_public/2020/02/13/vremenni_nasoki_za_pochistvane_na_okolna_sreda_v_obekti_tR5iTi0.pdf
https://www.mh.government.bg/media/filer_public/2020/03/25/preporke_za_potrebitelite_pri_pokupke_na_produkta_za_lichna_khigiena_v_tch_i_dezinfektsiia.pdf

RECOMMENDATIONS TO EMPLOYEES:

- Before starting work, immediately after coming to work, it is mandatory to wash your hands with soap and water.
- Wear nose and mouth protection, preferably a protection helmet and protective gloves (depending on the specifics of the job) when performing your duties.
- Keep a safe distance from the interlocutor and colleagues (minimum 1.5 meters is recommended).
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water according to the instructions and disinfect your hands with a disinfectant with virocidal or partial virocidal action. Disinfection is recommended when it is not possible to wash your hands.
- Try not to touch the face, especially the lips, nose and eyes.
- Keep workplaces clean and hygienic, especially after work. Be sure to disinfect contact surfaces such as telephone handset, keyboard and mouse, light switches or desks.
- Regularly (several times a day) clean communal areas that guests come into contact with, such as front door handles, railings, countertops, chair backs, elevators, and more.

Appendix № 2

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF PREMISES OR SPECIFIC AREAS AT THE ESTABLISHMENT IN CASE OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

The following should apply to rooms or specific areas in case of exposure to COVID-19:

- Clean any surfaces regularly, e.g. toilets, sinks and bathtubs and disinfect them with biocidal product with virocidal or partial virocidal action according to the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- All contact surfaces are also subject to disinfection, e.g. telephone, remote control equipment, door handles, elevator buttons, etc.
- When possible, use only disposable cleaning materials. Discard cleaning materials made from towels and absorbent materials, e.g. mops and wipes. Where appropriate, disinfect them with sodium hypochlorite solution with a disinfectant (biocide) according to the manufacturer's instructions before using them in other rooms.
- Textiles, linen and clothing should be placed in specially marked laundry bags and

handled carefully to prevent dust from rising and subsequent potential contamination of surrounding surfaces or people. Instructions for laundry must be given: washing with hot water (thermo-disinfection) and detergent at a water temperature of 90°C for at least 20 minutes;

- Wash with lukewarm water at a temperature of 40-60 ° C with suitable disinfectants (biocides), e.g. those containing sodium hypochlorite in an appropriate concentration (chemo-thermodisinfection).
- All items used should be carefully treated appropriately to reduce the risk of potential transmission. Disposable items (hand towels, gloves, masks, etc.) should be placed in a container with a lid and disposed of in accordance with the site's action plan and the national waste management regulations.
- The establishment should have sufficient hand and surface disinfectants.
- All rooms and communal areas should be ventilated daily.

